



2006 VCE VET Community Services GA 2: Written examination

GENERAL COMMENTS

The 2006 examination was the first to assess students in the revised VCE VET Community Services program. The examination was based on the compulsory units of competence that make up the Unit 3–4 sequence and the elective competencies in the stream students have undertaken; that is, either the Community Services or the Children’s Services stream. In 2006, 383 students sat the examination.

The examination emphasised fundamental aspects of the core units in Community Services, including effective communication, confidentiality and privacy, client rights, duty of care, OH&S and policies, procedures and programs. The scenario allowed students to apply their knowledge to a given situation. The electives provided students with the opportunity to use specialist knowledge to respond to the situations given. Students were required to complete only **one** of the two electives in Section C. Similar numbers of students chose each elective.

There were some high-scoring students whose responses demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the material. At the low end of performance, students were limited to repeating key words and phrases, often from the question, in an endeavour to give any answer rather than a considered response to the situation provided. Most students were able to gather marks from questions worth one to three marks, but there were relatively few detailed and appropriate responses to those four to six mark questions where the interpretation and application of concepts was required.

Community Service workers in both streams are required to be competent and caring but also able to produce relevant, accurate and legible reports in a timely manner. This should be an important area of focus for students and trainers and should be reflected in the students’ examination responses.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section A – Short answer questions

This section focused on some of the key terms, skills and underlying values in the VCE VET Community Services program. The questions were designed to assess whether students had an understanding of basic, yet critical, definitions from the core units of competence.

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	7	10	83	1.8

Common areas of community service work include:

- aged care
- disability work
- health and leisure areas
- children’s services.

There were a number of suitable answers to this question. Assessors were looking for an understanding of the vast areas of work covered by the Community Services sector.

Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	15	18	24	22	21	2.2

2a.

Information that should be gathered includes:

- client needs (what they require or would like)
- their ability for independence
- the results of tests from professionals
- whether there are tests recommended to be done
- advice of health professionals for implementation.

As assessment is the second stage in the process, personal details would have already been taken; therefore this response was incorrect.

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2b.

Aspects to be considered include:

- success or development of care plan
- whether goals were achieved
- if the plan requires modification
- setting new goals.

Client satisfaction was given in the question, so no marks were awarded for repeating it.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	4	13	35	37	12	2.4

3a.

- Confidentiality is an **ethical** matter about the sharing of information.
- Privacy is a **legal** matter. Only essential information is to be collected and this is to be safeguarded.

Results for this question reflected the general lack of understanding about these key concepts, with a number of students repeating the same ideas for both terms.

3b.

Other rights of the client include:

- freedom of choice/speech
- justice
- equity
- access to services
- freedom from discrimination.

Client's rights were reasonably well known. Both responses needed to be different from each other, not just a rewording of the same right.

Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	25	43	32	1.1

Principles of 'duty of care' include:

- guard against the infringement of rights
- ensure no harm comes to those in your care
- provide a safe environment for clients and colleagues by the manner of your work conduct.

There was some confusion between the concept of rights and duty of care. These are basic concepts that students should be able to define and distinguish.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	22	15	16	16	14	9	8	2.5

5i.

Students needed to indicate knowledge of the OH&S Act, workplace standards set by law and fines for workplaces breaches.

5ii.

There needs to be a clear understanding in the workplace of the organisation's views about OH&S.

5iii.

Students needed to mention practices applied, steps to be taken, and manuals or instructions that workers are trained in and familiar with.

This question was designed for students to provide a clear expression of the differences between the three areas that affect OH&S and is an important aspect of core units of competence. There were few responses which reflected an understanding of these concepts.

2006 Assessment Report



Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	17	23	60	1.5

Characteristics of effective communication include:

- adopting positive body language
- making eye contact with the speaker or audience
- acknowledging the speaker
- rephrasing to ensure understanding
- using clear and appropriate language
- active listening.

Effective communication involves a number of key elements. The majority of students gave two correct examples.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	2	4	14	80	2.7

Information needed includes:

- who the call was for
- action required
- caller's contact information
- other caller details
- name of message taker.

This was very well answered, reflecting a good understanding of the procedure involved in this process. The date and time of call were given so these were not acceptable responses.

Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	13	7	24	19	37	2.6

Examples of personal challenges for young people include:

- finances
- transport
- social group isolation
- moving from family
- accommodation
- new experiences.

This question required students to apply their understanding of transition from school to work, not just the challenges facing young people generally. Strong answers identified an example such as those above and then went on to explain why they are challenges to young people.

Section B – Scenario

Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	3	18	79	1.8

Methods that could be used include:

- telephone or mail survey
- public meeting
- interviews
- poll
- feedback sheets.

A range of different responses were given for this question and answers reflected a good understanding of this area.

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Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	7	12	81	1.8

One mark was available for the advantage and one for the disadvantage. For example, a telephone survey provides a quick response, opportunity for feedback and can reach many people but it is random, may not be accurate and some people may be missed out.

Question 3

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	13	33	55	1.4

Personal needs of young people include:

- sense of belonging
- sense of self
- positive interactions with family and friends
- housing
- having rights and choices.

This question was managed reasonably well, but some students were not able to clearly distinguish a personal need.

Question 4

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	16	49	35	1.2

Social needs include:

- financial independence
- access to transport
- leisure opportunities
- to be included
- access to support outside the family.

Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	16	39	45	1.3

Relationship needs of young people include:

- having adequate and appropriate information to be able to make informed decisions
- to experience positive intimate relationships
- emotional/social needs found within a relationship.

Question 6

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	19	38	43	1.3

This question required students to apply their knowledge of what empowerment means in order to explain how it occurs. Suggestions such as having a role in the decision making, participation in the process, building self-esteem and taking on responsibility were appropriate.

Question 7

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	16	8	13	26	15	11	11	2.9

Barrier 1

- not considering preventative processes
- lack of information about the other services provided by the centre
- history of self-diagnosis and treatment

Barrier 2

- lack of anonymity
- assumptions made about the reasons for attending

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- consequences of parents knowing about appointments/consultations (family conflict)
- others recognising and talking about them (lack of privacy)

Barrier 3

- some young people don't plan ahead (impulsive)
- can't get there to make an appointment
- wait until something happens
- avoid or ignore something that can't be dealt with immediately

This question required an understanding of **how** each of the factors given is a barrier. A number of students rewrote the information provided and offered no explanation for the problem.

Question 8

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	20	29	51	1.3

Marks were given for two suggestions or one well-developed suggestion which discussed things such as:

- networking with schools
- having workers make themselves known and available
- generating displays about availability and diversity of services
- emphasising confidentiality
- meeting at other places
- providing walk-in appointments
- offering outreach services.

Question 9

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	14	33	53	1.4

Aspects of leisure include:

- can be done alone
- can be without rules or expectations
- may be freely chosen (in contrast to being imposed by the school)
- can be relaxing
- may not require physical effort.

A clear understanding of the distinction between sport and leisure was required to answer this question.

Question 10

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	15	37	48	1.4

The health benefits of leisure include:

- de-stressing
- provides quiet time
- provides recreational activities other than sport
- non-competitive
- address aspects of life/personality other than fitness.

Responses needed to go beyond simply stating 'keeping you healthy' in order to achieve full marks.

Question 11

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	10	23	40	27	1.8

Social

- opportunities to interact with a variety of groups
- develop friendships with people who have common interests
- belonging to networks

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Personal

- improve emotional sense of wellbeing
- achieve success through a framework
- sense of personal achievement
- it can be undertaken alone, in a person's own time.

Relationships

- learn about aspects of positive and negative relationships through experiences
- develop relationships through shared time
- broaden relationship possibilities

Most students had a reasonable idea of the benefits of leisure, although some still used examples from sport.

Question 12

Marks	0	1	Average
%	38	62	0.6

Appropriate responses provided a definition such as 'The pressure from others within the same age group or your peers (the people you socialise with)'.

Although students understood and related to the concept of pressure, the peer group was not as well described.

Question 13

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	2	21	77	1.8

This question was generally well answered, with students providing ideas such as:

- run youth-specific groups to assist them in the process
- organise the distribution of QUIT packs
- conduct a local campaign about the dangers of smoking for young people
- invite guest speakers (for example, ex-smokers) to talk about the dangers of smoking
- encourage local shopkeepers and police to enforce the age requirements.

Question 14

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	4	33	62	1.6

It is not an appropriate course of action because:

- it creates dissention and division
- young people don't like to be 'bossed'
- it disempowers the young
- is not conducive to problem solving.

Again students were generally able to respond appropriately to this question.

Question 15

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	Average
%	6	7	14	28	20	14	11	3.4

15i.

- ensure there is a time frame/agenda
- have a chairperson or someone to direct the meeting
- negotiate acceptable behaviours

15ii.

- encourage respectful/active listening
- ensure sufficient time is allocated
- limit the time given each speaker, and ensure all those who want to speak are given the chance
- provide interpreters/information in other languages if required

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15iii.

- seek agreement on the process of decision making; for example, majority rules, empower the chair to decide, agree on a show of hands (these relate to some of the negotiated aspects in part i.)
- seek a future action plan

This question referred to client participation and support in a meeting setting and required information about meeting procedures.

Question 16

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	Average
%	20	32	27	12	9	1.6

Knowledge of the conflict resolution process was required to respond appropriately to this question. Reference should have been made to who, how, what, why and when. This could have been done in words or diagram form. Students were expected to discuss a process which involves identification of the areas/issues of conflict; such as mediation, consultation, negotiation, suggested strategies, implementation and resolution.

Section C – Electives

Elective 1 – Children’s Services Stream

Questions 1–2

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Average
%	5	9	13	12	6	12	19	24	4.4

Question 1

Developmental areas include:

- physical
- social
- emotional
- intellectual
- cognitive
- creative.

Most students were able to give two or more examples.

Question 2

As children learn through play, it is part of their ‘work’ and develops social, learning and physical skills.

Questions 3–6

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Average
%	5	7	9	10	12	14	10	9	6	6	7	6	5.3

Question 3

Three **different** criteria were required and included:

- safety
- hygiene
- variety
- opportunity for various types of play
- physical and cognitive challenges.

The age specification needed to be ticked and responses appropriate to the age given.

Question 4

Developmental stages in sequence may have included

- solitary
- parallel/associative
- cooperative

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- competitive

or

- 0–2 sensor motor
- 2–7 preoperational
- 7–9 concrete operational
- 9+ formal.

Question 5

Options for recording observations include:

- running record
- anecdotal report
- written report
- check list
- diary
- photos (with parental permission).

Question 6

Ethical issues include:

- the need for parental consent
- respect for confidentiality and privacy
- whether the information is objective
- the need to take account of any cultural issues
- being able to use methods of observation that are relevant and appropriate for the age and developmental stage of the child.

Questions 7–9

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	3	3	5	11	10	17	19	17	14	5.2

Question 7

Types of information which may be gathered include:

- their preferences for play
- which activities they find interesting
- how they interact with others
- what skills they exhibit.

Question 8

Appropriate responses referred to:

- showing equal interest in all members of the group, their families, customs, etc.
- developing activities that encourage sharing of cultural backgrounds (for example, show and tell – stories from different cultures)
- acknowledging children’s differences
- using activities that promote recognition of diversity within the group.

Cultural diversity is an important aspect which a number of students did not seem to understand well.

Question 9

Students were required to justify the response they selected giving valid reasons for **and** against. For example, if statement 3 was selected, ‘for: professionals have knowledge and skills; against: children may not bond with parents and may learn bad habits’.

Question 10

Marks	0	1	2	Average
%	20	26	54	1.4

Rights of children include:

- a safe environment (to explore and operate with confidence in)

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- activity choice (to develop individual preferences, encourage autonomy/creativity/areas of interest)
- be affirmed (to promote a sense of belonging, security, self-esteem).

Elective 2 – Community Services Stream

Questions 1–3

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	16	10	22	4	6	7	9	11	13	3.6

Question 1

The four principles are:

- access
- equity
- participation
- rights.

Question 2

An example of an appropriate answer is, 'Principle: Equity. Equity is an issue because everyone should be able to take public transport regardless of age, ability or financial situation.'

Question 3

Research into who, what, when, how and why. For example, government plans for development in the area, what transport is available and where it goes, who requires transport and the costs of available transport.

Questions 4–7

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Average
%	7	10	13	13	11	13	13	12	7	4.0

Question 4

The advocacy process might involve:

- consultation
- identifying the issues/needs
- clarifying the issues/needs
- negotiating strategies
- considering options and action plans.

The process of advocacy needed to be explored rather than a specific type.

Question 5

Examples of possible responses include:

- social isolation
- lowering self-esteem
- lack of opportunity with regard to education, employment, health and welfare
- weakened community networks.

Question 6

Australians communities are comprised of people from a range of backgrounds/countries of origin/family traditions, etc. who speak a range of languages.

Question 7

7i.

Providing information in the community's home language and interpreter services.

7ii.

Being respectful of cultural practices when working with clients and developing programs.

Specific examples were required to demonstrate the practical application of these concepts.

2006 Assessment Report



Questions 8–9

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Average
%	9	7	13	14	20	19	13	7	3.7

Question 8

The community itself needs to consider what is required, then create an action plan from within the group which will generate independence and empowerment. They will need support and assistance to do it.

This question required students to give an explanation of what community development is.

Question 9

Disadvantages

- not part of the community
- has own agenda
- limited commitment
- detracts from the issue

Advantages

- gives a higher profile to the cause
- provides greater credibility for the group
- attracts new people to the cause
- encourages media awareness
- provides access to a larger community

There were a variety of possible responses to this question, including those given above.

Question 10

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	Average
%	42	22	13	8	8	6	1.4

Response number 2, because:

- it gets the community involved
- it is empowering because they take responsibility
- it is self-motivating
- it provides independence for the group
- they may need assistance from others but have the skills, knowledge and confidence to explore the options.

This question was poorly answered. Students needed to select the answer **most** consistent with community development principles; that is, Response 2 as the community is working together to generate solutions. Some marks were awarded where students were able to provide points justifying other responses.